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# PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS

VOL. 34

FEBRUARY 21, 1919

No. 8

## EPIDEMIC INFLUENZA.

### PREVALENCE IN THE UNITED STATES.

Telegraphic reports from State health officers for the week ended February 15, 1919, indicate a general decline in the number of cases of influenza reported. As compared with the preceding week fewer cases were notified in Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Virginia. (See p. 354.)

Arkansas and Vermont reported increases, but the number of cases was not large, and both States show decided decreases as compared with the reports for the week ended February 1.

Reports from the zones surrounding Army camps indicate that a slightly smaller number of cases was reported than during the preceding week. (See p. 357.)

With local variations, the number of cases of influenza reported has declined since about the middle of January in all parts of the country from which reports have been received.

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## CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS OF INTEREST TO HEALTH OFFICIALS.

Supervisor, social hygiene (female).....	\$2, 000-\$2, 500
Special agent, social hygiene (female).....	1, 200- 1, 800
Assistant special agent, social hygiene (female).....	600- 1, 000

In developing the field activities of the campaign against venereal diseases the Public Health Service contemplates appointing about 40 special agents in social hygiene, 10 supervisors, and a number of assistant special agents. These positions are open to women only, and appointments will be for work in various parts of the United States.

The duties of the supervisors will be to represent the Section on Women and Girls of the Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board in a supervisory capacity. The work will include the planning and organization of the work of special agents, promoting of community interest and social legislation, reporting on local conditions, collecting special data from time to time, and representing this section at conferences and public gatherings.

The duties of the special agents will be to perform social case work with delinquent women and girls, to assist in securing the examination and treatment of those infected with venereal diseases, to aid in the enforcement of laws regarding commercialized vice, to visit places of amusement and report on conditions found. Appointees will also be required to compile community reports and case records of individuals dealt with. They must be capable of working without immediate supervision and must possess qualifications necessary to enlist the local community's interest and cooperation.

The duties of the assistant special agents, will be to perform social case work with delinquent women and girls similar to those performed by special agents, namely, assisting in securing the examination and treatment of those infected with venereal diseases, aiding in the enforcement of laws regarding commercialized vice, visiting public places of amusement and reporting on conditions found, etc.

These positions will be filled as the result of open competitive examinations conducted by the United States Civil Service Commission. The examinations will be held March 25 and 26, 1919.

For further information address the Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C.

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## LETHARGIC ENCEPHALITIS.

### A NOTIFIABLE DISEASE IN ENGLAND.

The attention of health officers is invited to the following instructive description of a new epidemic disease recently observed in Europe. It is desirable to know whether any such cases have been observed in this country, and if so, to what extent the disease prevails.

At a meeting of the Vienna psychiatric society, held in April, 1917, Von Economo described a group of cases of a disease occurring in epidemic form to which he gave the name "encephalitis lethargica." A discussion concerning the same disorder was held the following month by the Paris Academy of Medicine, and Prof. Netter there expressed the opinion that the disease was not a form of acute poliomyelitis. He also quoted some evidence in support of the view that the disease occurred at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century in Germany and more definite evidence that it occurred in Upper Italy and Hungary in 1890. Very suggestive cases occurred in nearly all the countries of Europe and in the United States in the spring of 1895. From the data presented by Von Economo it is evident that the disease occurred in Vienna in the winter of 1916-17.

The first case noted in England occurred February 11, 1918, in Bermondsey, and the largest number of cases in one week was 18, in the last week in April. The number of cases declined thereafter,